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TO ALCGCIV

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COMDTNOTE 12700

ALCGCIV 004/04

SUBJECT: HR DESIGN NEWS CORNER: DHS HRMS MYTHS AND FACTS

A. DHS TODAY - JANUARY 16, 2004

1. PROPOSED REGULATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENTS NEW PERSONNEL SYSTEM ARE SCHEDULED TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER EARLY THIS YEAR. FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS, A 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD WILL ENSUE. ALL EMPLOYEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO VOICE THEIR THOUGHTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCERNS DURING THIS PERIOD.

2. WHILE THE REGULATORY PROCESS RESTRICTS COMMENTING ON THE DETAILS OF THE NEW HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (HRMS) BEFORE THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS ARE PUBLISHED, WE WANTED TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS AND DISPEL VARIOUS MYTHS THAT WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE NEW SYSTEM THROUGH FEEDBACK TO THE HR DESIGN MAILBOX AS WELL AS CONVERSATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS.

3. GENERAL:

MYTH: ALL DHS EMPLOYEES WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE NEW SYSTEM.

FACT: THE NEW SYSTEM WILL COVER MOST DHS EMPLOYEES CURRENTLY COVERED UNDER TITLE 5 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE, EXCEPT EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE OFFICIALS. THE NEW SYSTEM WILL NEVER APPLY TO MILITARY EMPLOYEES. STAFFORD ACT EMPLOYEES AND TSA EMPLOYEES WILL NOT BE INCLUDED INITIALLY, BUT COULD BE INCLUDED IN THE FUTURE.

4. PAY AND BENEFITS:

A. MYTH: THERE WILL BE PAY CUTS.

FACT: THERE WILL NOT BE A REDUCTION IN CURRENT PAY FOR EMPLOYEES DURING THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW SYSTEM.

B. MYTH: THE OVERTIME STRUCTURE WILL BE CHANGED OR ELIMINATED.

FACT: THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT GRANTED DHS AND OPM THE AUTHORITY TO REVIEW AND, IF NECESSARY, MAKE CHANGES TO BASE PAY, NOT PREMIUM OR OVERTIME PAY. THEREFORE, THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS WILL NOT ADDRESS OR CHANGE CURRENT OVERTIME POLICIES AND PRACTICES.

C. HOWEVER, THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT DOES REQUIRE DHS TO REVIEW THESE PAY STRUCTURES, IDENTIFY POSSIBLE DISPARITIES, AND SUBMIT A PLAN FOR ELIMINATING ANY UNWARRANTED DISPARITIES. DHS PROVIDED A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO CONGRESS ON POSSIBLE PAY AND BENEFITS DISPARITIES ON MARCH 5, 2003, AND CONTINUES TO REVIEW THESE ISSUES.

D. MYTH: THE NEW HRMS WILL CHANGE RETIREMENT, HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS, OR LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS.

FACT: THE NEW HRMS DOES NOT CHANGE IN ANY WAY THE RULES REGARDING RETIREMENT, HEALTH OR LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS, OR LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS.

5. STAFFING:

MYTH: THERE WILL BE LAY-OFFS.

FACT: NO JOBS WILL BE ELIMINATED BECAUSE OF THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW SYSTEM.

6. TRAINING:

MYTH: MANAGERS WILL NOT RECEIVE ADEQUATE TRAINING ON THE NEW SYSTEM.

FACT: TRAINING WILL BE A CENTRAL COMPONENT OF THE NEW SYSTEM, AND ALL MANAGERS WILL RECEIVE TRAINING ON THE RULES OF THE NEW SYSTEM AS WELL AS HOW TO ADMINISTER THEM FAIRLY AND EQUITABLY.

7. EMPLOYEE AND UNION INVOLVEMENT:

A. MYTH: EMPLOYEES AND UNIONS WILL NOT HAVE A VOICE UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM.

FACT: EMPLOYEES AND THEIR UNION REPRESENTATIVES ARE PROVIDING VALUABLE INPUT TO THE DEPARTMENT IN THE DESIGN OF THE NEW SYSTEM. EMPLOYEES AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE ON THE HRMS DESIGN TEAM.

PRESIDENTS OF THE THREE LARGEST UNIONS IN DHS (AFGE, NTEU, NAAE) ALSO SHARED A SEAT AT THE TABLE AT THE SENIOR REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETINGS. EMPLOYEES AND THEIR UNION REPRESENTATIVES WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE DURING THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW SYSTEM THROUGH ONGOING COLLABORATION AND REPRESENTATION ON IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS.

B. EMPLOYEES WILL ALSO HAVE A VOICE THROUGH EMPLOYEE SURVEYS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND OTHER METHODS THE DEPARTMENT WILL USE TO EVALUATE HOW WELL THE NEW SYSTEM IS WORKING. THE RESULTS OF THESE EVALUATIONS WILL HELP DETERMINE IF CHANGES NEED TO BE MADE.

8. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

WHEN THE PROPOSED RULES ARE PUBLISHED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER THERE WILL BE GUIDANCE ON HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS IF YOU WANT THEM TO BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE RULEMAKING PROCESS. WE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THIS GUIDANCE IN AN UPCOMING HR DESIGN NEWS CORNER ARTICLE. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE HR DESIGN PROCESS, THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE:

A. THE "NEW HR SYSTEM" SECTION ON THE DHS INTRANET (WWW.DHSONLINE.DHS.GOV) INCLUDES DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE HR DESIGN TEAM, SENIOR REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETINGS, TOWN HALL MEETINGS AND EMPLOYEE FOCUS GROUPS AS WELL AS AN ARCHIVE OF ALL THE HR DESIGN NEWS CORNER ARTICLES. TO ACCESS THIS SECTION, CLICK ON THE MANAGEMENT TAB FROM THE HOMEPAGE, THEN CLICK ON "PERSONNEL," THEN "NEW HR SYSTEM." PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MUST BE ON A DHS COMPUTER TO ACCESS THIS SITE.

B. HR DESIGN INFORMATION IS ALSO POSTED IN THE EMPLOYEE SECTION ON THE DHS WEB SITE AT: [HTTP://WWW.DHS.GOV/DHSPUBLIC/INTERAPP/EDITORIAL/EDITORIAL_0345.XML](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/editorial/editorial_0345.xml) (LOWER CASE).

9. WE CONTINUE TO WELCOME YOUR IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND CONCERNS ABOUT THE NEW HR SYSTEM. PLEASE SEND YOUR FEEDBACK TO [HRDESIGN\(AT\)DHS.GOV](mailto:HRDESIGN(AT)DHS.GOV).

10. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.

11. RONALD R. KOGUT, CHIEF, OFFICE OF CIVILIAN PERSONNEL SENDS.

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